

CLAIMS

The following listing of claims lists all of the pending claims, and supersedes all prior listings, and versions, of claims in this application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) An access system for a computer site, comprising:
a certificate authentication component to verify a user's identity from a digital certificate supplied by the user,
a directory, coupled to the certificate authentication component, to maintain an account for each individual user, each account containing an access policy specifying at least one portion of the computer site to which the corresponding user is permitted access, and
an access control system, coupled to the directory, for controlling access to computer site by permitting the user to access a portion of the computer site and restricting the user from accessing at least one other portion of the computer site, based on the access policy associated with the individual user in a directory, wherein the access policy is used to provide tiered access for different sets of users to a plurality of security levels.
- 2 - 17. (Canceled)
18. (New) The access system of claim 1, further comprising a digital signing module that produces and stores at least one of a digital signature and a timestamp for a transaction.
19. (New) The access system of claim 1, wherein users are categorized into discrete sets, and each set is granted access to a particular portion of the computer site according to the access policy.
20. (New) The access system of claim 1, the system configured to use information relating to the user to present to the user personalized information.

21. (New) The access system of claim 20, wherein the information relating to the user is at least one of the user's navigation history and the user's preferences.

22. (New) The access system of claim 20, wherein the personalized information is at least one of information relating to new products and developments in the user's field of interest.

23. (New) The access system of claim 1, the system configured to maintain an archive relating to the account, the archive including information relating to at least one of purchases made, available credit, applicable discounts, and links to specific recorded transactions.

24. (New) The access system of claim 1, the account further containing at least one of an internet protocol (IP) address and a certificate authorization method associated with the user.

25. (New) The access system of claim 1, the system being configured with functionality for supporting desired functionality of designated users.

26. (New) The access system of claim 1, further comprising an automation component to permit automation of certificate authorization.

27. (New) A method, comprising:
receiving a request from a user to access a computer site or a portion thereof, the request including information representative of the user's identity;

verifying the user's identity from the information by consulting a directory that includes accounts for individual users, each account containing an access policy specifying at least one portion of the computer site to which the corresponding user is permitted access;

controlling access to the computer site by permitting the user to access a portion of the computer site and restricting the user from accessing at least one other portion of the computer site, based on the access policy for the user, wherein the access policy is used to provide tiered access for different sets of users to a plurality of security levels.

controlling access to the computer site by permitting the user to access a portion of the computer site and restricting the user from accessing at least one other portion of the computer site, based on the access policy associated with the user.

28. (New) The method of claim 27, further comprising producing and storing at least one of a digital signature and a timestamp for a transaction.

29. (New) The method of claim 27, further comprising categorizing users into discrete sets, and granting each set access to a particular portion of the computer site according to the access policy.

30. (New) The method of claim 27, further comprising using information relating to the user to present to the user personalized information.

31. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the information relating to the user is at least one of the user's navigation history and the user's preferences.

32. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the personalized information is at least one of information relating to new products and developments in the user's field of interest.

33. (New) The method of claim 27, further comprising maintaining an archive relating to the account, the archive including information relating to at least one of purchases made, available credit, applicable discounts, and links to specific recorded transactions.

34. (New) The method of claim 27, the account further containing at least one of an internet protocol (IP) address and a certificate authorization method associated with the user.

35. (New) The method of claim 27, further comprising supporting desired functionality of designated users.

36. (New) The method of claim 27, further comprising automating certificate authorization.

37. (New) An access system for a computer site, comprising:
a certificate authentication component to verify a user's identity from a digital certificate supplied by the user,
a directory, coupled to the certificate authentication component, to maintain an account for each individual user, each account containing an access policy specifying at least one portion of the computer site to which the corresponding user is permitted access, and
an access control system, coupled to the directory, for controlling access to computer site by permitting the user to access a portion of the computer site and restricting the user from accessing at least one other portion of the computer site, based on the access policy associated with the individual user in a directory, wherein the access policy is used to provide tiered access for different sets of users to a plurality of security levels;
and further wherein the access control system is configured to use information relating to the user to present to the user personalized information, the information relating to the user being at least one of the user's navigation history and the user's preferences, and the personalized information being at least one of information relating to new products and developments in the user's field of interest.